FREE SAMPLE LESSON · SUNDAY SCHOOL · STD 5 · LESSON 1

What Would Carlo Do With My Phone?

Not yet reviewed

This lesson follows the four steps used in Sunday School: Introduction, Development, Word of God, Expression. It has not yet been reviewed by a pastor or a Sunday School teacher. Pastors, priests and Sunday School teachers are invited to comment. Write to **remainhuman.lessons@gmail.com**

The one thing: We are stewards. Everything we have is a gift from God, given into our care, and that includes the phone, tablet or computer in our home, together with the AI on it.

TIME	FOR	THEME	CODE
40 minutes	Std 5	Jesus and His Parables	SS5-1

For the teacher

The one thing: We are stewards. Everything we have is a gift from God, given into our care: our body, our life, our family and friends, our things, and the phone, tablet or computer in our home, together with the AI on it. A steward looks after a gift for the Giver and uses it for the good of others.

Word of God: The Parable of the Talents, Matthew 25:14–30.

Memory verse: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)

You need: a Bible, a board or chart paper, and one small wrapped box or gift bag (empty is fine). No phones, no screens, no printouts.

Preparation: under ten minutes. Read Matthew 25:14–30 once and read the story of Carlo below.

A note on phones: many children in this group do not own a phone. Say "the phone in your home" so that no child feels left out. A note on AI: AI (artificial intelligence) is on phones, tablets, computers, smart speakers and TVs. Children meet it as the voice assistant, the chatbot and the app that picks the next video. In this lesson AI is a tool and a gift to look after. It is not a monster and it is not a person.

1 Introduction 7 minutes

Opening prayer. Make the Sign of the Cross together and pray: "Come, Holy Spirit. Open our eyes to see Your gifts, and open our hearts to use them well. Amen."

The gift box. Hold up the wrapped box. Ask: "If someone you love gave you this, what would you do with it?" Take three or four answers.

Then ask: "Now suppose it is not yours to keep. A friend is going away and says, 'Please look after this for me until I come back.' What changes?" Let the children answer. Draw out that you would be careful with it, you would not waste it, and you would want to hand it back in good shape.

Name the word. Write STEWARD on the board. Say: "A steward is someone who looks after something precious that belongs to another. Today we will find out that each of us is a steward."

Quick list. Ask: "What has God given you to look after?" Write the answers on the board. Help the children reach these: my body, my life, my family, my friends, my time, my talents, my things, and the phone, tablet or computer in my home, with the AI on it.

2 Development 15 minutes

The story of Carlo. Tell it in your own words.

Carlo Acutis was born in 1991 and grew up in Milan, in Italy. He loved football, his friends, his dogs and cats, and computers. He taught himself to write computer code when he was still a boy.

Carlo also loved video games. But he noticed something: the games could easily swallow his time. So he made a rule for himself. One hour of games a week, and no more. Nobody forced him. He chose it, because he wanted to be in charge of the screen and not the other way round.

With the rest of his time he prayed, went to church, and looked out for people in need. He saved his pocket money to buy sleeping bags and food for people living on the streets near his home. And he used his computer skill for the thing he loved most. He built a website to share his faith in Jesus with people all over the world.

Carlo died of leukaemia in 2006. He was fifteen years old.

Talk about it. Ask the whole group:

- What gifts did God give Carlo?
- Which of those gifts did Carlo keep only for himself?
- Why do you think he gave himself a rule about games?

Meet AI. Say: "Carlo had a computer. Today the phones, tablets and computers in our homes have something new inside them: AI, which is short for artificial intelligence. AI is a computer program that has learnt from millions of examples, so it can answer questions, write, draw and even talk." Ask: "Where have you seen or heard AI?" Take a few answers: the voice assistant that answers when you speak, the chatbot that writes an answer, the app that picks the next video. Then say: "People made AI with the minds God gave them. So AI is a gift from God too, placed in our care along with the phone. But AI is a tool. It cannot love, it cannot pray, and it cannot choose what is good. Only you can do that. A good steward uses the tool. The tool never uses the steward."

The steward's question. Say: "Carlo was a good steward. A steward always asks one question before using a gift: who will this be good for?" Write these four lines on the board:

- **At home:** how will this be good for my family?
- **At school:** how will this be good for my classmates and my school?
- **In my church:** how will this be good for the people there?
- **In the world:** how will this be good for my neighbours and for people I may never meet?

Small groups (5 minutes). Put the children in groups of four or five. Give each group one of the four lines. Each group thinks of one way the phone at home, and the AI on it, can be used well in that place, and one way they can be wasted or used to hurt. One child from each group reports back in one sentence.

3 Word of God 10 minutes

Prepare to listen. Ask the children to sit still. Say: "Jesus told a story about three stewards. Listen for what each one did with what he was given."

Proclaim. Read Matthew 25:14–30 slowly from the Bible. For the younger children in the group you may read verses 14–29 and tell the ending in your own words.

Break it open. Ask:

- Who do the coins belong to, the servants or the master?
- What did the first two servants do? What did the master say to them?
- What did the third servant do? Did he steal the coin or lose it? Then what was wrong?

Help the children see it: the third servant did nothing bad with the gift. He simply did nothing good with it. He buried it.

What the Bible teaches. Say this in your own words: "The Bible says: 'The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof' (Psalm 24:1). Everything belongs to God. So whatever we own, we hold as stewards. Our things are meant to do good for us and for others too." Then write J, O, Y down the board and say: "A steward keeps this order. Jesus first, Others second, Yourself last. Last does not mean left out. Looking after your body, your sleep and your mind is not selfish, because they are God's gifts too. Keep this order and you will find joy."

Bring it home. Say: "A phone is a talent placed in our hands, and so is the AI on it. We can bury them in hours of scrolling. We can let AI do our thinking and our homework for us. We can use them to hurt. Or, like Carlo, we can use them as tools to learn, to help, to stay close to the people we love, and to bring others closer to God."

Memory verse. Say it together three times, the last time with eyes closed: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Ask: "If someone looked at how you spend your free time, what would they say your treasure is?" No answers aloud. Give a few seconds of silence.

4 Expression 8 minutes

My steward's promise. Each child opens a notebook and writes:

- One gift God has given me is ...
- This week I will use it for the good of ... by ...
- My screen and AI rule for this week is ...

Children who are happy to share may read theirs to a partner. Nobody is forced to share.

Closing prayer. Gather in a circle. Pray one line at a time and let the children repeat it:

Lord Jesus, everything I have comes from You.

My body and my life are Your gifts.

My family and my friends are Your gifts.

My time, my talents, and the phone and the AI in my home are Your gifts.

Make me a good and faithful steward.

Teach me to ask, "Who will this be good for?"

Amen.

Finish with one Our Father.

Send them out with this line. Say it once and ask the children to say it back: "Your life is God's gift to you. What you make of your life is your gift to God."

Family page (code SS5-1)

For parents. Today your child learnt that we are stewards. Everything we have is a gift from God placed in our care, and that includes the phone, tablet or computer in our home and the AI on it. AI is a tool to use well. It cannot do our loving, our praying or our choosing for us.

Story reminder. Your child heard about a boy named Carlo Acutis (1991 to 2006), from Milan who loved football, his friends, his pets and computers. He kept himself to one hour of video games a week, shared his pocket money with people living on the streets, and built a website to share his faith. Your child also heard Jesus' Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30).

Talk about it at home.

- What are three gifts God has given our family?
- How can the phone in our home, and the AI on it, be good for the whole family this week?

- What one screen and AI rule shall we all keep together, parents included?

Pray together. "Lord, all that we have is Yours. Make our family good and faithful stewards. Amen."

Memory verse. "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)

A Remain Human lesson. Written by Blaise D'Souza with the help of AI, and checked by people before it is taught.